



California Native American Heritage Commission Special Commission Meeting Minutes Open Session

Meeting Date: March 20, 2025

Meeting Time: 2:31 pm - 3:42pm

Meeting Location: California Natural Resource Agency, 715 P Street, Room 2-201,
Media Room, Sacramento, CA 95814

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Reginald Pagaling, *Chairperson*
Buffy McQuillen, *Vice-Chairperson*
Sara Dutschke, *Secretary*
Wayne Nelson, *Parliamentarian*
Isaac Bojorquez
Bennae Calac

COMMISSIONERS REMOTE

Reid Milanovich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Stanley Rodriguez

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Quinn, *Acting Executive Secretary*
Michelle Carr, *Chief Counsel*
Conner Mulligan, *Staff Services Manager*
Rebecca Glashan, *Staff Services Analyst*
Emily Archer, *Office Technician*
Maria Elena Sepulveda, *Office Technician*

STAFF REMOTE

Mario Pallari, *Attorney*

CALL TO ORDER

1. Chairperson Pagaling called the special meeting to order at 2:31 pm.
2. Roll call – a quorum was established.
3. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Commissioners and staff were introduced.
4. Commissioner Nelson led the Traditional Opening.

CLOSED SESSION

Pending litigation: City of Corona v. Native American Heritage Commission, Superior Court of Riverside County, Case No. CV-RI-24-00445 (Government Code, §11126(e)(1),(2)(A)).

Public Comment

Patricia Dixon, Secretary for the Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians. Ms. Dixon stated that Pauma will be listening to what will be taking place regarding the Corona event.

Enter Closed Session at 2:36 pm.

Return from Closed Session at 3:14 pm.

ACTION

1. Discussion and possible action in the matter of City of Corona v. NAHC, Superior Court of Riverside County, Case No. CV-RI-24-00445.

Commission to consider approving the settlement agreement between City of Corona and NAHC, and to authorize Chairperson Pagaling to sign on behalf of the NAHC.

Commission Vote: Approve the settlement agreement between City of Corona and NAHC, and to authorize Chairperson Pagaling to sign on behalf of the NAHC.

Motion: Secretary Dutschke

Second: Vice-Chairperson McQuillen

Roll Call Vote: all votes Aye.

Aye 7; Nay 0; Abstained 0

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Cole Bauman, Associate Counsel for Pechanga Band of Indians. Mr. Bauman requested that the NAHC remove Kizh Nation as a Most Likely Descendant from the Corona designation. Corona is in Luiseño territories. The Commission was advised in April 2022 that the co-MLD had potential consequences for the Luiseño tribes. The City is moving forward with destroying the burial site and will result in disturbances of remains. The language used by the City regarding these disturbances is contrary to the actions of the City. Mr. Bauman requested that Kizh Nation be removed from the co-MLD designation.
2. Paul Macarro, Cultural Coordinator for Pechanga Band of Indians. Mr. Macarro stated that in October 2023 Pechanga submitted a document with tribal knowledge for the Corona site which documented the cemetery's association with the Pechanga people. Mr. Macarro provided additional details regarding the sacred and historic nature surrounding the current Corona site. Mr. Macarro stated that while territories overlap, that does not mean that other tribes should claim Luiseño villages. In April 2023 all three groups met at Pechanga to seek consensus to continue to pursue protection of ancestors without archaeological screenings. After much discussion, all three co-MLDs agreed to move forward with preservation without archaeological screenings. A day later the Kizh Nation MLD decided to move in the opposite direction. The City and Kizh Nation have not worked with the co-MLDs. Mr. Macarro stated their hearts are not good, they are heartbroken.
3. Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Preservation Officer for the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians. Mr. Ontiveros stated that the City is moving forward without an actual plan in place. The City is moving forward with activities with day-to-day planning and is acting haphazardly. The reinternment letter is not including Luiseño MLDs in the process. An archaeologist on site for the City has determined that there are resources on the surface within the area that the City has proposed for reburial. This has made things extremely difficult because we are having to sit back and watch this desecration take place. A seat was not at the table for the Luiseño bands. The Soboba Tribe asks for a formal review of the NAHC staff's MLD determination.
4. Ted Griswold, Procopio Law Firm for Pechanga Band of Indians and other Luiseño bands. We are dealing with an awkward situation where the City has used the co-MLD designation to exploit the tribes and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Descendants have used the co-MLD designation for their own interest. Pechanga and Soboba have not given up on this situation. Mr. Griswold stated his understanding is that on previous occasions the Commission has revised MLD designations. On February 24, 2025, the City informed the tribes of their own plan for reinternment. The City claims that these lands are exempt from CEQA. The City has decided to choose which MLD to have meaningful discussions

with, and which MLDs not to. The City has decided to exclude MLDs that they are not in favor of and the City is deciding how to treat ancestors. These actions are not consistent with the MLD statute. We look forward to working with the NAHC to avoid this problem in the future for a meaningful process when multiple MLDs are determined by the Commission.

Public Comment (Remote)

1. Patricia Dixon, Secretary for Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians. Ms. Dixon stated Pauma is present and in support of the Luiseño tribes. The denial of multiple MLDs is detrimental to all of us and is not recognizing the traditional territories of the Luiseño people. While the City is using the law to choose who they work with, this is not the spirit or the intent of the law. The NAHC needs to reevaluate how it conducts business. The land itself is the core of who we are as people, not what you put on it.

Chairperson Pagaling exited at 3:38pm.

Vice-Chairperson McQuillen asked Chief Counsel Carr if she could advise on responding to commenters.

Chief Counsel Carr advised that public comment is not meant to be dynamic, but the Commission can direct Executive Staff to agendize items on the April 2025 agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Commission Vote: Adjourn the March 20, 2025, Special Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Bojorquez

Second: Commissioner Calac

Roll Call Vote: all votes Aye.

Aye 6; Nay 0; Abstained 0

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted and approved on behalf of the NAHC.

Reginald Pagaling, *Chairperson*

Sara Dutschke, *Secretary*